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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1343
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0478
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1953
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1017
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2513
RUEHRK/AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK 0164
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 1171
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0652
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4386
RUEH MJ/AMEMBASSY MAJURO 0079
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 1072

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/J and OES/OA - MHAYES/JFIELD
USDOC FOR NOAA/NMFS - US IWC COMMISSIONER HOGARTH AND McCARTY

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [KSCA](#) [IWC](#) [ETRD](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: WHALING: GOJ FULL SPEED AHEAD

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle appropriately.

11. (SBU) On January 25, Greenpeace's vessel "Esperanza" ended its shadowing of the Japanese research whaling fleet in the Southern Ocean due to lack of fuel, a Greenpeace official in Tokyo confirmed. She told EconFSN the NGO will continue its campaign against Japan's whaling activities, but for now that campaign will no longer include pursuing the Japanese research whaling fleet. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) official reported that on January 23, the Ministry had asked the Netherlands, which registers the "Esperanza", to prevent a repeat of the ship's attempts to obstruct the fueling of the Japanese whale processing ship. In addition, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's vessel, according to a front page article in the Sankei Shimbun January 28, soon will exhaust its fuel supplies as well, likely ending this year's high seas drama between Japan and anti-whaling NGOs. The Fisheries Agency of Japan confirmed press reports that Japan Coast Guard officers have been on board the Japanese whaling factory vessel the "Nisshin Maru" to videotape anti-whaling activities and provide for the crew's safety.

12. (SBU) Discussions continue in diplomatic channels, however. Japanese Foreign Minister Koumura and Agriculture Minister Wakabayashi both raised whaling with Australian Trade Minister Crean during his January 23 - 25 visit to Tokyo. According to press reports confirmed by the Australian Embassy, Crean did not discuss specific actions in regards to the GOA's opposition to Japanese whaling practices, but stated "the whaling issue must not spill over into other cooperative bilateral relations." Australian Foreign Minister Smith is expected to discuss whaling during his January 31 - February 1 visit to Tokyo in addition to the Australia/Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (i.e., a bilateral free trade deal) and climate change.

13. (U) While Australia and MOFA have worked to compartmentalize the whaling issue in their bilateral relations, Japan's press has stirred up thinking that whaling might spill over into the G-8 Summit, hurting Japan's credibility on environmental issues and posing a security threat to the Environment Ministerial. The Tokyo Shimbun ran an article January 28 by Nakahiro Iwata asserting that the GOJ is concerned the international community is more critical of Japan's research whaling than of environmentalists' interference with Japan's whaling ships. Iwata reported the GOJ is taking steps to prevent the issue from becoming a problem in the run-up to the G-8 Summit. He quoted Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura as saying "we will make sure to take appropriate steps so that dangerous

actions will not be repeated toward the G-8 Summit." The January 28 Sankei Shimbun article accused New Zealand and Australia of providing "rear area support" to "eco-terrorists" attacking the Japanese whaling fleet. The paper also reported Japan's National Police Agency is collecting information on anti-whaling activists and quoted Hyogo Prefecture police as saying it will have to strengthen security from the land, sea, and air for the G-8 Environment Ministerial in May 2008.

SCHIEFFER